

EXHIBIT 2



HOOPA VALLEY TRIBAL COUNCIL

Hoopa Valley Tribe
Post Office Box 1348 Hoopa, California 95546
PH (530) 625-4211 • FX (530) 625-4594
www.hoopa-nsn.gov



Chairman Byron Nelson, Jr.

January 5, 2021

The Honorable Deb Haaland
Secretary Designate
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Re: Hoopa Valley Tribe v. U.S. Department of the Interior,

Dear Secretary-Designate Haaland:

The Hoopa Valley Tribe congratulates you on your recent nomination by the Biden team and looks forward to your timely appointment!

In the summer of 2020, the Hoopa Valley Tribe was forced to sue the Trump Administration to block new federal water contracts for California's Central Valley Project (CVP) that violate laws passed to protect our fishing rights and restore California natural resources damaged by irrigation and power development. We are bringing this matter to your attention to request that you take all measures at your disposal to realign the Department's adversarial position in the litigation to one of a protector of the Hoopa Valley Tribe's property rights in water and fishery resources that the United State holds in trust. We further request an opportunity to confer with you at your earliest convenience about this matter. However, time is of the essence; if the Central Valley Project contracts are not reformed our rights will be irreparably harmed.

We sued the Department because the water for the CVP contracts comes from our homelands in northwestern California, at the junction of the Klamath and Trinity Rivers. This is where our people came into being and have lived for millennia as stewards of the once abundant fishery resources that nourish us spiritually and physically.¹

In 1955, the federal government came for our river. As part of the massive CVP, Congress built dams and tunneled through the Trinity Alps to send our water to central California where it generates electricity and irrigates desert lands 400 miles distant from our home. Usage of Trinity River water has also created massive wealth for San Joaquin

¹ See attached map. Read or download a copy of the Hoopa Valley Tribe's *Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief* [at this link](https://bit.ly/30PXiUu) or go to <https://bit.ly/30PXiUu>.

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Valley agribusiness unfortunately at the expense of our fish and water rights.


Although Congress' Trinity project law included a promise of sufficient water for our fishery and economic development, federal officials promptly and continuously broke that promise. By the 1970s, so much water had been taken from the river that our fishery collapsed.

At first our people were staggered by the damage to our fishery. Then we took action to file lawsuits, propose regulations, draft legislation and collaborate with state and federal authorities. In 1992, our efforts helped create the most important water legislation in California history, the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA). The CVPIA included a fishery restoration mandate for the Hoopa Valley Tribe, along with explicit protections for our federally protected property rights in the fishery. Significantly, the law also specified that water contractors, not taxpayers, would pay for environmental restoration and maintenance of our fishery. After a long fight, we thought we had won.

Now, on its way out the door, the Trump administration has rewritten CVP water contracts to override, evade and violate our property rights and environmental protections guaranteed by the CVPIA and other federal laws. In addition, these contracts would shift hundreds of millions of dollars in environmental restoration costs from water contractors to the U.S. taxpayer.

The Hoopa Valley Tribe calls on you to rescind these unlawful contracts and honor our rights. We look forward to conferring further with you about this matter. Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Byron Nelson Jr.', with a stylized, cursive script.

Byron Nelson Jr.

Chairman, Hoopa Valley Tribe